

Message Text

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ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 DODE-00 NRC-07 NSAE-00 TRSE-00

ERDA-07 CIAE-00 COME-00 ERDE-00 SSO-00 MC-02 ACDA-10

/046 W

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O 011247Z MAR 76

FM AMEMBASSY MADRID

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4780

INFO US MISSION EC BRUSSELS 1997

UNCLAS MADRID 1568

DEPT PASS ERDA

DEPT PASS NRC

E.O.11652: N/A

TAGS: ENRG, ESTC, SP

SUBJECT: REQUEST TO EXPEDITE EXPORT LICENSE

BEGIN SUMMARY. EMBASSY WOULD APPRECIATE DEPARTMENT'S EFFORTS TO OBTAIN EXPORT LICENSE FOR 128 FUEL ELEMENTS, NOW DUE DEPART NORFOLK MAR 3. DESTINED TO NUCLENOR IN SANTANDER AND NEEDED FOR REOPENING OF SANTA MARIA DE GARONA REACTOR SCHEDULED FOR LATE APRIL. THIS REACTOR, A SIGNIFICANT SOURCE OF ELECTRIC POWER FOR ENTIRE NORTHWEST REGION OF SPAIN, ESPECIALLY IN VIEW OF RECENT DROUGHT AND COAL STRIKES WHICH HAVE REDUCED HYDRO AND COAL POWERED ELECTRICITY. END SUMMARY.

1. JOSE LUIS SANCHEZ, MANAGER OF CENTRALES NUCLEARES DEL NORTE S.A. NUCLENOR ASKED MAR 1 FOR EMBASSY'S ASSISTANCE IN EXPEDITING EXPORT LICENSE FOR 128 FUEL BUNDLES DUE TO DEPART NORFOLK BOUND FOR BILBAO AND THE SANTA MARIA DE GARONA REACTOR IN BURGOS PROVINCE. THESE BUNDLES WHICH SANCHEZ TOLD EMBOFF CONSIST OF ABOUT 190 KILOS OF URANIUM ENRICHED TO

ABOUT 2.UM TO 2.8 PER CENT OF U-235

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AND ARE NEEDED BY LATE MARCH SO THAT PLANT CAN BE

SHUT DOWN, INSPECTED ACCORDING TO STANDARD PROCEDURES, AND REOPENED IN THE LATTER PART OF APRIL. GE REPRESENTATIVES HERE HAVE CONFIRMED HIS ACCOUNT OF SITUATION.

2. NUCLENOR HAS FOUR YEAR CONTRACT WITH GE FOR SUPPLYING FUEL FOR THIS PLANT AND THIS IS FIRST SUPPLY UNDER THIS CONTRACT. IN ADDITION, NUCLENOR, ACCORDING TO SANCHEZ, HAS BEEN IMPORTING FUEL FROM US FOR OTHER CENTERS SINCE 1961 AVERAGING 100 ELEMENTS PER YEAR AND THIS IS FIRST PROBLEM NUCLENOR HAS HAD WITH EXPORT CONTROLS. ITS REPRESENTATIVES ARE SURPRIZED AND DISAPPOINTED.

3. BEYOND PUBLIC RELATIONS ASPECT OF PROBLEM, NUCLENOR AND GE REPS INFORMED EMBOFF THAT THIS REACTOR IS AN IMPORTANT SUPPLIER OF ELECTRIC POWER FOR ENTIRE NORTHWESTERN REGION OF SPAIN. ITS IMPORTANCE IN THAT ROLE INCREASED LATELY AS RESULT OF DROUGHT WHICH HAS MADE HYDROELECTRIC POWER SCARCER. IN ADDITION COAL STRIKES IN THAT PART OF SPAIN CREATING SHORTAGES OF THAT FUEL AND DECREASING RELIABILITY AND PRODUCTION OF ELECTRIC POWER FROM THAT SOURCE. FOR THIS REASON INABILITY NUCLENOR START PLANT RESTART ON TIME WITH THESE ELEMENTS COULD CONTRIBUTE TO ELECTRICITY SHORTAGE IN NORTHERN SPAIN.

4. EMBASSY UNDERSTANDS LICENSE REQUIRES, AMONG OTHER THINGS, STATEMENT FROM GSO THAT SUBJECT FUEL BUNDLES WILL BE USED IN THE GARONA REACTOR ONLY AND THAT THIS STATEMENT WHICH SPANISH EMBASSY (SIERRA) ALREADY ISSUED IS STILL PENDING ACTION IN ERDA OR NRC. DEPARTMENT URGED EXPEDITE ISSUANCE EXPORT LICENSE IN ORDER THAT SUBJECT FUEL ELEMENTS CAN SAIL ON MAR 3.
STABLER

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